**Policy case studies technical note**

The following case studies provide examples of “what good policy could look like”. Clearly, the policy wording required for your Local Authority area will be unique – you should reference specific rivers and local water assets by name and also highlight and present ways to address the key water challenges of your area. However, the following example policies demonstrate the type of wording and focus that could be replicated and is intended to help provide ideas for your own specifically worded policy.

Note that most of the example policies are from adopted local plans, so inevitably are likely to have been drafted several years ago and as a result may not reflect all of the latest policy, legislation and guidance. Therefore this will need to be checked as part of drafting plans and policies. Note that a few example policies from draft rather than adopted plans have also been included to illustrate some newer topics not often included in adopted plans (such as nature based solutions).

The policy case studies have been grouped into the following categories – this includes the four water disciplines (flood risk, water resources, water quality and environment, and wastewater) used in the toolkit plus some other cross cutting categories (note that some policies are relevant to several categories):

* Holistic approach to water management
* Flood risk
* Water resources
* Water environment and water quality
* Wastewater
* Green and blue infrastructure
* Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)

The policies included in these categories are listed in the table below.

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| **Policy case studies: Holistic approach to water management**   * Cambridge City Local Plan - Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle * Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD * Peterborough Local Plan and SPD |
| **Policy case studies: Flood risk**   * Lambeth Local Plan 2020-2035 - Policy EN5: Flood Risk * Peterborough Local Plan 2019: Policy LP32: Flood and Water Management * South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - Policy CC/9: Managing Flood Risk * South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - Policy CC/8: Sustainable Drainage Systems * Cambridge City Local Plan (2018) - Policy 32: Flood risk * West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (2018) - Policy EH7: Flood risk * Wealden District Council Draft Local Plan - Policy CC7 Managing Flood Risk |
| **Policy case studies: Water resources**   * South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - Policy CC/7: Water Quality * Cambridge City Local Plan - Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle * The Mayor of London - The London Plan 2021. The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London: Policy SI 5: Water infrastructure * Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (2023) - Policy S12: Water Efficiency and Sustainable Water Management * Peterborough Local Plan 2019: Policy LP32: Flood and Water Management * Wealden District Council Draft Local Plan - Policy CC6: Water Efficiency |
| **Policy case studies: Water Environment and Water quality**   * South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - Policy CC/7: Water Quality * Peterborough Local Plan 2019: Policy LP32: Flood and Water Management * Milton Keynes Plan:MK 2016 – 2031 (2019) - Policy FR3: Protecting and Enhancing Watercourses * Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan – Policy NE2: River and stream corridors * Wealden District Council Draft Local Plan - Policy NE13: Water Environment and Water Instructure |
| **Policy case studies: Wastewater**   * South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - Policy CC/7: Water Quality * Cambridge City Local Plan - Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle * Policy case studies: Green and Blue Infrastructure * A Sustainable Town. Watford Local Plan 2021-2038 (2022) - NE9.3 Blue Infrastructure Network * Peterborough Local Plan - Policy LP22 Green Infrastructure Network and Policy LP24: Nene Valley |
| **Policy case studies: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)**   * Milton Keynes Plan:MK 2016 – 2031 (2019) - Policy FR2: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Integrated Flood Risk Management / Protecting and Enhancing Watercourses |

The matrices below indicate which of the examples policies are most relevant to which directive included in the toolkit under the four water disciplines (flood risk, water resources, water quality and environment, and wastewater).

**Flood Risk**

| **Directives** | **Example policies** | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cambridge City - 31: IWM and the water cycle** | **Lambeth - EN5: Flood Risk** | **Peterborough - LP32: Flood and Water Man.** | **South Camb. - CC/9: Managing Flood Risk** | **South Camb. - CC/8: Sustainable Drainage** | **Cambridge City - 32: Flood risk** | **West Oxfordshire -EH7: Flood risk** | **Wealden - CC7: Managing Flood Risk** | **Watford - NE9.3 Blue Infrastructure Network** | **Milton Keynes - FR2: SuDS and Int. FRM** |
| **PP\_FR1: SFRA** |  | • |  |  |  |  |  | • |  |  |
| **PP\_FR2: All sources of flooding** |  | • |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PP\_FR3: Floodplain** |  | • |  |  |  |  |  | • |  |  |
| **PP\_FR4: Inappropriate development** |  | • |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PP\_FR5: Site layout and design** |  | • |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PP\_FR6: Climate change** |  | • | • | • |  | • |  | • |  | • |
| **PP\_FR7: Multi-functional approaches** | • |  |  |  |  |  | • |  |  | • |
| **PP\_FR8: Natural flood management** | • |  |  |  |  |  |  | • | • |  |
| **PP\_FR9: Safeguarding land** |  |  |  |  |  |  | • |  |  |  |
| **PP\_FR10: Flood defences** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PP\_FR11: Surface water management** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PP\_FR12: SuDS** | • | • | • |  | • |  | • |  |  | • |
| **PP\_FR13: Relocation** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Water resources**

| **Directives** | **Example policies** | | | | | | | | |
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| **South Cambs - Policy CC/7: Water Quality** | **Camb. City - Policy 31: IWM & water cycle** | **London - Policy SI 5: Water infrastructure** | **Central Lincs - Policy S12: Water Eff. &. Man.** | **Peterboro. - Policy LP32: Flood & Water Man.** | **Watford – Policy NE9.3: Blue Infra. Network** | **Peterborough - Policy LP22: GI Network** | **Milton Keynes – Policy FR2: SuDS & Int. FRM** | **Wealden - Policy CC6 Water Efficiency** |
| **PP\_WR1: Water surplus** |  |  |  |  | • |  |  |  |  |
| **PP\_WR2: Water supply infrastructure** | • |  | • |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PP\_WR3: Availability of water** |  | • |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PP\_WR4: Internal water use** |  |  | • | • | • |  |  |  | • |
| **PP\_WR5: Restricting water usage** |  |  | • | • | • |  |  |  | • |
| **PP\_WR6: Green and blue infrastructure** |  |  |  |  |  | • | • | • |  |
| **PP\_WR7: Water man. and blues space** |  | • |  | • |  | • | • | • |  |
| **PP\_WR8: SuDS** |  | • |  |  | • |  |  | • |  |

**Water Quality and Environment**

| **Directives** | **Example policies** | | | | | | | | |
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| **Cambridge City - 31: IWM & the water cycle** | **S. Cambs - Policy CC/7: Water Quality** | **Peterboro. - Policy LP32: Flood and WM** | **Milton Keynes - Policy FR3: Watercourses** | **Aylesbury – Policy NE2: River corridors** | **Watford - NE9.3: Blue Infrastructure Network** | **Peterborough - Policy LP22: GI Network** | **Milton Keynes - FR2: SuDS and Int. FRM** | **Wealden – Policy: NE13 Water env. & Infra.** |
| **PP\_WQ1: Diffused sources** | • | • |  |  |  | • |  |  | • |
| **PP\_WQ2: Local environmental conditions** | • | • | • | • | • | • |  |  | • |
| **PP\_WQ3: Water pollution** | • | • | • | • |  | • |  |  | • |
| **PP\_WQ4: Multifunctional benefits** | • |  | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| **PP\_WQ5: Climate change** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | • |  |
| **PP\_WQ6: Non-mains drainage** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PP\_WQ7: Water quality priorities** |  | • |  |  |  | • |  |  | • |
| **PP\_WQ8: SPZ and abstraction areas** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | • |
| **PP\_WQ9: Improving water quality / SuDS** | • | • |  |  |  | • | • | • | • |

**Wastewater**

| **Directives** | **Example policies** | | | | | |
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| **S. Cambs - Policy CC/7: Water Quality** | **Cambridge City - 31: IWM and the water** | **Watford - NE9.3: Blue Infrastructure Network** | **Peterboro. - Policy LP22: GI network** | **Milton Keynes - Policy FR2: SuDS & IWM / watercourses** | **Wealden – Policy: NE13 Water env. & Infra.** |
| **PP\_WW1: SuDS / surface water run off** | • | • |  |  | • |  |
| **PP\_WW2: SuDS** | • |  |  |  | • |  |
| **PP\_WW3: Runoff from brownfield sites** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PP\_WW4: Wastewater infrastructure** | • |  |  |  |  | • |
| **PP\_WW5: Holistic approach** | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| **PP\_WW6: Green infrastructure** |  | • | • | • |  |  |
| **PP\_WW7: Green and blue infrastructure** |  | • | • |  |  |  |
| **PP\_WW8: Wastewater infrastructure provision** | • |  |  |  |  | • |

**Policy case studies: Holistic approach to water management**

**Cambridge City Local Plan - Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle**

[Local Plan 2018 - Cambridge City Council](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/local-plan-2018)

Cambridge City Policy 31 takes a holistic management approach, including addressing Integrated Water Management (IWM) and the water environment.

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| **Cambridge City Local Plan 2018**  **Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle**  Development will be permitted provided that:  a. surface water is managed close to its source and on the surface where reasonably practicable to do so;  b. priority is given to the use of nature services17;  c. water is seen as a resource and is re-used where practicable, offsetting potable water demand, and that a water sensitive approach is taken to the design of the development;  d. the features that manage surface water are commensurate with the design of the development in terms of size, form and materials and make an active contribution to making places for people;  e. surface water management features are multi-functional wherever possible in their land use;  f. any flat roof is a green or brown roof, providing that it is acceptable in terms of its context in the historic environment of Cambridge (see Policy 61: Conservation and Enhancement of Cambridge’s Historic Environment) and the structural capacity of the roof if it is a refurbishment. Green or brown roofs should be widely used in large-scale new communities;  g. there is no discharge from the developed site for rainfall depths up to 5 mm of any rainfall event;  h. the run-off from all hard surfaces shall receive an appropriate level of treatment in accordance with Sustainable Drainage Systems guidelines, SUDS Manual (CIRIA C753), to minimise the risk of pollution;  i. development adjacent to a water body actively seeks to enhance the water body in terms of its hydromorphology, biodiversity potential and setting;  j. watercourses are not culverted and any opportunity to remove culverts is taken; and  k. all hard surfaces are permeable surfaces where reasonably practicable, and having regard to groundwater protection  *17Nature services are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) as: ‘The benefits people obtain from ecosystems such as, food, water, flood and disease control and recreation’. These are also known as ecosystem services.* |

**Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD**

[Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD - Cambridge City Council](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/cambridgeshire-flood-and-water-spd)

The SPD provides guidance for developers on how to manage flood risk and the water environment as part of new development proposals.

The Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD specifically outlines the RBMP priorities in Chapter 7 (Water Environment). This chapter considers the water environment in response to the requirements (e.g. ecological matters) set out within the Water Framework Directive, and it looks at what supporting plans are in place to support those objectives from a planning perspective. For the majority of planning applications, compliance with the Directive will be dealt with via the Environment Impact Assessment requirements, but for some applications that have a direct impact upon a waterbody, a more detailed assessment may be required.

**Peterborough Local Plan and SPD**

[Adopted Local Plan: development documents - Peterborough City Council](https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/planning-and-development/planning-policies/local-development-plan)

[Supplementary planning documents - Peterborough City Council](https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/planning-and-development/planning-policies/supplementary-planning-documents)

The Peterborough Local Plan was adopted in 2019. The main water related policies are LP22, LP24, LP32 and supplementary planning documents. This suite of policies are considered a strong water policies as they provide strong policy support for green infrastructure, reduction of the risk of flooding and increases in water efficiency of new development. Policy LP32 integrates flood risk and water quality into one policy. Whilst the green infrastructure policy (LP22) could make better reference to blue infrastructure assets, it does recognise the importance of the city’s water bodies. The Nene valley is recognised through inclusion of a specific policy. The policies were developed with thorough stakeholder involvement.

**Policy case studies: Flood risk**

**Lambeth Local Plan 2020-2035 - Policy EN5: Flood Risk**

[Lambeth Local Plan 2021 | Lambeth Council](https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy-guidance/lambeth-local-plan-2021)

Lambeth Council Policy EN5 incorporates key policy requirements to minimise flood risk, including applying the sequential test approach and sequential test, makes clear reference to the Lambeth SFRA, and includes locally specific criteria related to defences at the River Thames and Graveney. Importantly it provides an important connection to climate change, for example, setting out that a FRA must consider the impacts of climate change.

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| **Lambeth Local Plan 2020-2035**  **Policy EN5: Flood Risk**  A. The council will seek to minimise the impact of flooding in the borough through:  i. applying a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development to avoid, where possible, flood risk to people and property and manage any residual risk, taking account of the impacts of climate change over the lifetime of the development;  ii. steering development towards areas of lowest flood risk, both across Lambeth and within the development site boundary, through the application of the Sequential Test in accordance with the NPPF, taking the vulnerability of the proposed uses into account, as set out in the Lambeth Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA);  iii. ensuring development does not increase flood risk and where possible reduces flood risk from all sources of flooding;  iv. permitting appropriate development in Flood Zones 1, 2, 3a and 3b subject to meeting the criteria set out in Annex 4; and  v. taking account of the flood risk management measures identified by the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan.  B. All development in Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b defined in the SFRA, or identified as at risk of flooding from other sources, should contribute positively to actively reducing flood risk through avoidance, reduction, management and mitigation.  C. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required for major development proposals within Flood Zone 1, all development within Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b, or where the development may be subject to other sources of flooding. The FRA should be proportionate with the degree of flood risk posed to and by the proposed development; consider the impact of climate change on flood risk to and from the development using the latest government guidance; and take account of the advice and recommendations set out in the SFRA, Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) and Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS).  D. FRAs must consider the risks of both on and off-site flooding to and from the development for all sources of flooding including fluvial, tidal, surface water run-off, groundwater, ordinary watercourse, sewer (separate or combined) and reservoir.  E. For all developments, it must be demonstrated that the development will be safe (for its lifetime), and where required, it will reduce fluvial, tidal, surface water run-off and groundwater flood risk and manage residual risks through appropriate flood risk measures, including the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) in accordance with Local Plan policy EN6. Measures to mitigate flooding from sewers should be discussed with Thames Water Utilities Ltd. and be included in development proposals for which this is a risk.  G. For developments adjacent to the River Thames and River Graveney, maintenance, remediation and improvements to the flood defence walls will be required where necessary. Developments adjacent to defences and culverts should demonstrate that their development will not undermine the structural integrity or detrimentally impact upon its intended operation and future maintenance.  Note: *Criteria F of this policy regarding the use of basements has been excluded because it is arguably not in accordance with NPPF/PPG which states that basement dwellings (defined as Highly vulnerable in National Planning Policy Framework - Annex 3: Flood risk vulnerability classification - Guidance - GOV.UK (*[*www.gov.uk)*](http://www.gov.uk))*) should not be permitted in Flood Zone 3 (See Table 2 Flood risk and coastal change - GOV.UK (*[*www.gov.uk)*](http://www.gov.uk))*).* |

**Peterborough Local Plan 2019: Policy LP32: Flood and Water Management**

[Adopted Local Plan: development documents - Peterborough City Council](https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/planning-and-development/planning-policies/local-development-plan)

Peterborough policy LP32 sets out the council’s approach to flood risk management as well as measures to protect the water environment that must be demonstrated. It states that development proposals should adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management taking into account the requirements of the NPPF with further guidance and advice set out in the council’s Flood and Water Management SPD ([Supplementary planning documents - Peterborough City Council](https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/planning-and-development/planning-policies/supplementary-planning-documents)). It also sets out requirements that need to be adopted by development located in areas known to be at risk from any form of flooding, the requirements for site-specific Flood Risk Assessments and how proposals are expected to protect the water environment.

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| **Peterborough Local Plan 2019**  **Policy LP32: Flood and Water Management**  Development proposals should adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management, taking into account the requirements of the NPPF and the further guidance and advice set out in the council’s Flood and Water Management SPD.  Development located in areas known to be at risk from any form of flooding will only be permitted following:   * 1. the successful completion of a sequential test (if necessary) and an exception test if required;   2. the submission of a site-specific flood risk assessment, setting out appropriate flood risk management and demonstrating no increased risk of flooding to the development site or to existing properties, and where possible should seek to reduce flood risk;   3. the consideration of any necessary ongoing maintenance, management of mitigation measures and adoption and that any relevant agreements are in place; and   4. the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) into the proposals.   A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and risks involved, taking into account future climate change, will be required for development  proposals:   * in Flood Zones 2 and 3; and * in Flood Zone 1 where there are critical drainage problems; and * on sites of 1 hectare or greater in Flood Zone 1; and * sites where development or change of use to a more vulnerable use may be subject to * other sources of flooding; and * sites of less than 1 hectare in Flood Zone 1 where they could be affected by sources of * flooding other than from rivers and the sea.   Development proposals should also protect the water environment and must demonstrate:   * 1. that water is available to support the development proposed;   2. that development contributes positively to the water environment and its ecology where possible and does not adversely affect surface and ground water;   3. that adequate foul water treatment and disposal already exists or can be provided in time to serve the development;   4. in areas served by combined sewers, surface and foul flows should be separated and no new combined sewers created. Connections to the existing combined sewer should only be made in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that there are no feasible alternatives, such as (and in this priority order): into the ground (infiltration); to a surface water body; or to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system (this applies to new developments and redevelopments). Where and existing combined or surface water sewer is utilised, there must be no detriment to existing users of such a sewer;   5. that suitable access is safeguarded for the maintenance of water supply and drainage infrastructure.   **Water Efficiency**  To minimise impact on the water environment all new dwellings should achieve the Optional Technical Housing Standard of 110 litres per day for water efficiency as described by Building Regulation G2. |

**South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - Policy CC/9: Managing Flood Risk**

[South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk)](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/the-adopted-development-plan/south-cambridgeshire-local-plan-2018)

South Cambridgeshire policy CC/9 sets out the council’s approach to flood risk management including requirements on development to be permitted, the need for Site specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and for FRAs to meet national standards and local guidance.

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| **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018**  **Policy CC/9: Managing Flood Risk**  1. In order to minimise flood risk, development will only be permitted where:   * 1. The sequential test and exception tests established by the National Planning Policy Framework demonstrate the development is acceptable (where required).   2. Floor levels are 300mm above the 1 in 100 year flood level plus an allowance for climate change where appropriate and where appropriate and practicable also 300mm above adjacent highway levels.   3. Suitable flood protection / mitigation measures are incorporated as appropriate to the level and nature of flood risk, which can be satisfactorily implemented to ensure safe occupation, access and egress. Management and maintenance plans will be required, including arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime;   4. There would be no increase to flood risk elsewhere, and opportunities to reduce flood risk elsewhere have been explored and taken (where appropriate), including limiting discharge of surface water (post development volume and peak rate) to natural greenfield rates or lower, and   5. The destination of the discharge obeys the following priority order:      1. Firstly, to the ground via infiltration;      2. Then, to a water body;      3. Then, to a surface water sewer;      4. Discharge to a foul water or combined sewer is unacceptable.   2. Site specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the risks involved, and which takes account of future climate change, will be required for the following:   * 1. Development proposals over 1ha in size;   2. Any other development proposals in flood zones 2 and 3;   3. Any other development proposals in flood zone 1 where evidence, in particular the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment or Surface Water Management Plans, indicates there are records of historic flooding or other sources of flooding, and/or a need for more detailed analysis.   3. FRAs will need to meet national standards and local guidance (including recommendations of the South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010) and the Phase 1 and 2 Water Cycle Strategy or successor documents). |

**South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - Policy CC/8: Sustainable Drainage Systems**

[South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk)](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/the-adopted-development-plan/south-cambridgeshire-local-plan-2018)

South Cambridgeshire’s local plan includes a stand-alone SuDS policy (policy CC/8) which is strongly worded with the policy requiring appropriate SuDS integration and sets a range of requirements with no conditions for exemption.

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| **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018**  **Policy CC/8: Sustainable Drainage Systems**  Development proposals must incorporate appropriate sustainable surface water drainage systems (SuDS) appropriate to the nature of the site.  Development proposals will be required to demonstrate that:  a. Surface water drainage schemes comply with the Sustainable Drainage Systems: Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems and the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document or successor documents;  b. Opportunities have been taken to integrate sustainable drainage with the development, create amenity, enhance biodiversity, and contribute to a network of green (and blue) open space;  c. Surface water is managed close to its source and on the surface where it practicable to do so;  d. Maximum use has been made of low land take drainage measures, such as rain water recycling, green roofs, permeable surfaces and water butts;  e. Appropriate pollution control measures have been incorporated, including multiple component treatment trains; and  f. Arrangements have been established for the whole life management and maintenance of surface water drainage systems. |

**Cambridge City Local Plan (2018) - Policy 32: Flood risk**

[Local Plan 2018 - Cambridge City Council](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/local-plan-2018)

Cambridge City Policy 32 covers requirements that development needs to demonstrate, including potential flood risk from the development such as run-off, flooding and discharges, and making an allowance for climate change. It also covers potential flood risk to the development both for undeveloped sites and previously developed sites.

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| **Cambridge City Local Plan (2018)**  **Policy 32: Flood risk**  **Potential flood risk from the development**  Development will be permitted providing it is demonstrated that:  a. the peak rate of run-off over the lifetime of the development, allowing for climate change, is no greater for the developed site than it was for the undeveloped site;  b. the post-development volume of run-off, allowing for climate change over the development lifetime, is no greater than it would have been for the undeveloped site. If this cannot be achieved then the limiting discharge is 2 litre/s/ha for all events up to the 100-year return period event;  c. the development is designed so that the flooding of property in and adjacent to the development would not occur for a 1 in 100 year event, plus an allowance for climate change and in the event of local drainage system failure;  d. the discharge locations have the capacity to receive all foul and surface water flows from the development, including discharge by infiltration, into water bodies and into sewers;  e. there is a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development, which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime; and  f. the destination of the discharge obeys the following priority order:   * firstly, to ground via infiltration; * then, to a water body; * then, to a surface water sewer.   Discharge to a foul water or combined sewer is unacceptable.  **Potential flood risk to the development**  Development will be permitted if an assessment of the flood risk is undertaken following the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and additionally:  ***For an undeveloped site:***  a. if it is not located within the Environment Agency’s flood zone 3b, unless it is a water-compatible development and does not increase flood risk elsewhere by either displacement of flood water or interruption of flood flow routes and employs flood resilient and resistant construction, including appropriate boundary treatment and has a safe means of evacuation; and  b. if it is not located within the Environment Agency’s flood zone 3a, unless it is a water compatible development or minor development when the principles in a) above apply; and  c. if it is located within the Environment Agency’s flood zone 2 or a surface water wet spot and employs flood resilient and resistant construction as appropriate; and  d. floor levels are 300mm above the 1-in-100-years flood level, plus an allowance for climate change where appropriate and/or 300mm above adjacent highway levels where appropriate.  ***For a previously developed site:***  Opportunities should be taken to reduce the existing flood risk by the positioning of any development so that it does not increase flood risk elsewhere by either displacement of flood water or interruption of flood flow routes, and it employs flood resilient and resistant construction including appropriate boundary treatment and has a safe means of evacuation. |

**West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (2018) - Policy EH7: Flood risk**

[local-plan.pdf (westoxon.gov.uk)](https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/feyjmpen/local-plan.pdf)

In addition to emphasising that flood risk will be managed using the sequential, risk-based approach including taking account of the impacts of climate change, the West Oxfordshire Policy EH7 includes that land required for flood management will be safeguarded from development and, where applicable, managed as part of the green infrastructure network, including maximising its biodiversity value.

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| **West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 (2018)**  **Policy EH7: Flood risk**  Flood risk will be managed using the sequential, risk-based approach, set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, of avoiding flood risk to people and property where possible and managing any residual risk (taking account of the impacts of climate change). In assessing proposals for development:   * the Sequential Test and, if necessary, the Exception Test will be applied; * all sources of flooding (including sewer flooding and surface water flooding) will need to be addressed and measures to manage or reduce their impacts, onsite and elsewhere, incorporated into the development proposal; * appropriate flood resilient and resistant measures should be used; * sustainable drainage systems to manage run-off and support improvements in water quality and pressures on sewer infrastructure will be integrated into the site design, maximising their habitat value and ensuring their long term maintenance; * site-specific flood risk assessment will be required for all proposals of 1ha or more and for any proposal in Flood Zone 2 and 3 and Critical Drainage Areas; * only water compatible uses and essential infrastructure will be allowed in a functional flood plain (Flood Zone 3b); * land required for flood management will be safeguarded from development and, where applicable, managed as part of the green infrastructure network, including maximising its biodiversity value. |

**Wealden District Council Draft Local Plan - Policy CC7 Managing Flood Risk**

[Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan - Keyplan (wealden.gov.uk)](https://consult.wealden.gov.uk/kpse/event/2726CE98-03BA-4520-8558-361BAA45F784/section/s17090296420957)

Whilst still a draft policy, the Wealden Policy CC7 provides an example of a policy where the council explicitly supports natural flood management measures and schemes that help to reduce flood risk in the wider catchment. This reflects the stronger recommendation now in the NPPG on the use of natural flood management (NFM) as part of an integrated approach to flood risk management and the provision of details on how techniques can be delivered, including encouraging the de-culverting and re-naturalisation of watercourses.

The Wealden Policy CC7 includes a requirement, where possible, that developments should seek to open up existing culverts to create a green/blue corridor.

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| **Wealden District Council Draft Local Plan**  **Policy CC7 Managing Flood Risk**  1. Development proposals will follow a sequential approach to flood risk management and will be guided to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from all sources, considering both existing and future flood risk.  2. Flood Zone 3b will be protected as the functional floodplain and its capacity to attenuate periodic flood events must not be compromised. Essential infrastructure that has passed the Exception test and water compatible uses will be permitted within Flood Zone 3b provided the development is designed and constructed to:  a) Remain operational and safe for users in times of flooding;  b) Result in no net loss of floodplain storage;  c) Not impede water flows; and  d) Not increase flood risk elsewhere.  Flood risk must be considered at an early stage in the design and layout of development to ensure that opportunities are maximised to reduce flood risk within the development.  All relevant development must demonstrate that it complies with the tests, recommendations and guidance specified by the Council’s Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), the NPPF and PPG. Proposals will need to:  a) Demonstrate that the development has been designed to be flood resilient and resistant and safe for its users for the lifetime of the development.  b) Use the latest climate change allowances for peak river flows, peak rainfall intensity and sea levels applicable to the catchment within which the development is located and the relevant epoch for the climate change allowance; and  c) Ensure that any proposals involving modifications of ground levels are fully assessed and the findings clearly set out.  Where required, flood mitigation must be implemented in accordance with the Council’s SFRA, the NPPF and PPG. Developers must ensure that mitigation does not increase flood risk elsewhere and that floodplain compensation is provided where necessary.  All new development close to rivers should consider, working the river with partners, the opportunity to improve, enhance and restore floodplain and river environment, including opportunities to create, enhance and improve the linking of green/blue infrastructure.  Where possible, developments should seek to open up existing culverts to create a green/bluecorridor. New culverts will not be permitted, unless it is demonstrated that the culvert is essential infrastructure and there is no viable alternative.  The Council will support natural flood management measures and schemes that help to reduce flood risk in the wider catchment.  Sequential and Exceptions Test  The development of sites at a greater risk of flooding (from any source) will only be considered where they comply with the requirements of the NPPF and associated PPG, specifically in regard to the application of the Sequential, and where required, Exceptions Tests.  Where schemes are located in flood risk areas, the Sequential approach must be used to ensure that the most vulnerable parts of the development site are in the areas of lowest flood risk. Developers will be expected to undertake early discussions with the Council, Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority and Southern Water.  Where schemes are located within the Pevensey Levels catchment, developers will also be expected to undertake early discussions with the Pevensey and Cuckmere Water Level Management Board. |

**Policy case studies: Water resources**

**South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - Policy CC/7: Water Quality**

[South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk)](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/the-adopted-development-plan/south-cambridgeshire-local-plan-2018)

South Cambridgeshire’s local plan includes policy CC/7 which whilst focussing on water quality, requires all development proposals must demonstrate that adequate water supply to serve the whole development, or an agreement with the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of the necessary infrastructure prior to the occupation of the development. Where development is being phased, each phase must demonstrate sufficient water supply.

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| **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018**  **Policy CC/7: Water Quality**  1. In order to protect and enhance water quality, all development proposals must demonstrate that:   * 1. There are adequate water supply, sewerage and land drainage systems (including water sources, water and waste water infrastructure) to serve the whole development, or an agreement with the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of the necessary infrastructure prior to the occupation of the development. Where development is being phased, each phase must demonstrate sufficient water supply and waste water conveyance, treatment and discharge capacity;   2. The quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed, and opportunities have been explored and taken for improvements to water quality, including renaturalisation of river morphology, and ecology;   3. Appropriate consideration is given to sources of pollution, and appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) measures incorporated to protect water quality from polluted surface water runoff.   2. Foul drainage to a public sewer should be provided wherever possible, but where it is demonstrated that it is not feasible, alternative facilities must not pose unacceptable risk to water quality or quantity. |

**Cambridge City Local Plan - Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle**

[Local Plan 2018 - Cambridge City Council](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/local-plan-2018)

Cambridge City Policy 31 focusses on Integrated Water Management (IWM) and the water environment which includes a requirement for water demand to be offset through reuse approaches where practicable and for a water sensitive approach to be adopted in development design.

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| **Cambridge Local Plan 2018**  **Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle**  Development will be permitted provided that:  a. surface water is managed close to its source and on the surface where reasonably practicable to do so;  b. priority is given to the use of nature services17;  c. water is seen as a resource and is re-used where practicable, offsetting potable water demand, and that a water sensitive approach is taken to the design of the development;  d. the features that manage surface water are commensurate with the design of the development in terms of size, form and materials and make an active contribution to making places for people;  e. surface water management features are multi-functional wherever possible in their land use;  f. any flat roof is a green or brown roof, providing that it is acceptable in terms of its context in the historic environment of Cambridge (see Policy 61: Conservation and Enhancement of Cambridge’s Historic Environment) and the structural capacity of the roof if it is a refurbishment. Green or brown roofs should be widely used in large-scale new communities;  g. there is no discharge from the developed site for rainfall depths up to 5 mm of any rainfall event;  h. the run-off from all hard surfaces shall receive an appropriate level of treatment in accordance with Sustainable Drainage Systems guidelines, SUDS Manual (CIRIA C753), to minimise the risk of pollution;  i. development adjacent to a water body actively seeks to enhance the water body in terms of its hydromorphology, biodiversity potential and setting;  j. watercourses are not culverted and any opportunity to remove culverts is taken; and  k. all hard surfaces are permeable surfaces where reasonably practicable, and having regard to groundwater protection  *17Nature services are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) as: ‘The benefits people obtain from ecosystems such as, food, water, flood and disease control and recreation’. These are also known as ecosystem services.* |

**The Mayor of London - The London Plan 2021. The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London: Policy SI 5: Water infrastructure**

[The London Plan 2021 | London City Hall](https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/london-plan-2021)

The London Plan sets the approach and mechanism to deal with significant levels of growth, alongside other unprecedented challenges, including climate change, through focussing on sustainable development. Policy SI 5 has been identified as good practice because it requires residential development to achieve mains water consumption of 105 l/p/d (plus 5 litres for external water consumption), which meets the higher optional building standards. Additionally, it requires BREEAM excellent standard for water efficiency, which aligns with the Environment Agency’s policy ask for commercial development, as outlined in the Climate Change Advice Note.

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| **The Mayor of London - The London Plan 2021. The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London**  **Policy SI 5: Water infrastructure**  A) In order to minimise the use of mains water, water supplies and resources should be protected and conserved in a sustainable manner.  B) Development Plans should promote improvements to water supply infrastructure to contribute to security of supply. This should be done in a timely, efficient and sustainable manner taking energy consumption into account.  C) Development proposals should:  1) through the use of Planning Conditions minimise the use of mains water in line with the Optional Requirement of the Building Regulations (residential development), achieving mains water consumption of 105 litres or less per head per day (excluding allowance of up to five litres for external water consumption)  2) achieve at least the BREEAM excellent standard for the ‘Wat 01’ water category160 or equivalent (commercial development)  3) incorporate measures such as smart metering, water saving and recycling measures, including retrofitting, to help to achieve lower water consumption rates and to maximise future-proofing.  D) In terms of water quality, Development Plans should:  1) promote the protection and improvement of the water environment in line with the Thames River Basin Management Plan, and should take account of Catchment Plans  2) support wastewater treatment infrastructure investment to accommodate London’s growth and climate change impacts. Such infrastructure should be constructed in a timely and sustainable manner taking account of new, smart technologies, intensification opportunities on existing sites, and energy implications. Boroughs should work with Thames Water in relation to local wastewater infrastructure requirements.  E) Development proposals should:  1) seek to improve the water environment and ensure that adequate wastewater infrastructure capacity is provided 160 Achieve at least a 12.5% improvement over defined baseline performance standard  2) take action to minimise the potential for misconnections between foul and surface water networks.  F) Development Plans and proposals for strategically or locally defined growth locations with particular flood risk constraints or where there is insufficient water infrastructure capacity should be informed by Integrated Water Management Strategies at an early stage |

**Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (2023) - Policy S12: Water Efficiency and Sustainable Water Management**

[Homepage | Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (n-kesteven.gov.uk)](https://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/central-lincolnshire)

The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan recognises climate change as a strategic priority for development in the area to facilitate becoming carbon net zero, and to set measures for adaptation to improve community resilience and provide opportunities for enhancing wildlife. The Plan also sets measures to enable the sustainable use of natural resources.

Policy S12 exceeds the mandatory national standard, as set out in the Building Regulations, clearly specifying new dwellings meet the tighter building standard of 110 l/p/d, as well as including wording that encourages proposals to go further voluntarily, e.g. achieving 85 l/p/d. The policy also sets water management requirements for new buildings, including rain harvesting and incorporating green roofs which we would encourage as part of sustainable design standards. It helpfully links to the wider water management policy criteria found in Policies S21 and S20.

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| **Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (2023)**  **Policy S12: Water Efficiency and Sustainable Water Management**  **Water efficiency**  To minimise impact on the water environment all new dwellings should achieve the Optional Technical Housing Standard of 110 l/p/d for water efficiency as described by Building Regulation G2. Proposals which go further than this (to, for example, 85 l/p/d) would be particularly supported.  **Water management**  In addition to the wider flood and water related policy requirements (Policy S21), all residential development or other development comprising new buildings:   * with outside hard surfacing, must ensure such surfacing is permeable (unless there are technical and unavoidable reasons for not doing so in certain areas) thereby reducing energy demand on the water recycling network; * should consider the potential to incorporate a green roof and/or walls in accordance with Policy S20; and * which is residential and which includes a garden area, must include a rain harvesting water butt(s) of minimum 100l capacity. |

**Peterborough Local Plan 2019: Policy LP32: Flood and Water Management**

[Adopted Local Plan: development documents - Peterborough City Council](https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/planning-and-development/planning-policies/local-development-plan)

[Supplementary planning documents - Peterborough City Council](https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/planning-and-development/planning-policies/supplementary-planning-documents)

Peterborough policy LP32 and Flood and Water Management SPD not only sets out the council’s approach to flood risk management and protecting the water environment, but also water efficiency to minimise impact on the water environment from new dwellings.

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| **Peterborough Local Plan 2019**  **Policy LP32: Flood and Water Management**  Development proposals should adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management, taking into account the requirements of the NPPF and the further guidance and advice set out in the council’s Flood and Water Management SPD.  Development located in areas known to be at risk from any form of flooding will only be permitted following:   * 1. the successful completion of a sequential test (if necessary) and an exception test if required;   2. the submission of a site-specific flood risk assessment, setting out appropriate flood risk management and demonstrating no increased risk of flooding to the development site or to existing properties, and where possible should seek to reduce flood risk;   3. the consideration of any necessary ongoing maintenance, management of mitigation measures and adoption and that any relevant agreements are in place; and   4. the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) into the proposals.   A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and risks involved, taking into account future climate change, will be required for development  proposals:   * in Flood Zones 2 and 3; and * in Flood Zone 1 where there are critical drainage problems; and * on sites of 1 hectare or greater in Flood Zone 1; and * sites where development or change of use to a more vulnerable use may be subject to * other sources of flooding; and * sites of less than 1 hectare in Flood Zone 1 where they could be affected by sources of * flooding other than from rivers and the sea.   Development proposals should also protect the water environment and must demonstrate:   * 1. that water is available to support the development proposed;   2. that development contributes positively to the water environment and its ecology where possible and does not adversely affect surface and ground water;   3. that adequate foul water treatment and disposal already exists or can be provided in time to serve the development;   4. in areas served by combined sewers, surface and foul flows should be separated and no new combined sewers created. Connections to the existing combined sewer should only be made in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that there are no feasible alternatives, such as (and in this priority order): into the ground (infiltration); to a surface water body; or to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system (this applies to new developments and redevelopments). Where and existing combined or surface water sewer is utilised, there must be no detriment to existing users of such a sewer;   5. that suitable access is safeguarded for the maintenance of water supply and drainage infrastructure.   **Water Efficiency**  To minimise impact on the water environment all new dwellings should achieve the Optional Technical Housing Standard of 110 litres per day for water efficiency as described by Building Regulation G2. |

**Wealden District Council Draft Local Plan - Policy CC6: Water Efficiency**

[Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan - Keyplan (wealden.gov.uk)](https://consult.wealden.gov.uk/kpse/event/2726CE98-03BA-4520-8558-361BAA45F784/section/s17090296420957)

Whilst still a draft policy, the Wealden Policy CC6 focusses on water efficiency and requires development to be planned positively to minimise its impact on, and make efficient use of, water resources, taking into account the impacts of climate change. It argues that the 110-litre standard can be achieved fully through low flow fixtures and fittings; but that all developments should seek to reduce water consumption as far as possible through additional water efficiency measures wherever possible.

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| **Wealden District Council Draft Local Plan**  **Policy CC6: Water Efficiency**  1. Applicants will be required to demonstrate, through the Sustainability Statement or the Design and Access Statement, that the development has been planned positively to minimise its impact on, and make efficient use of, water resources, taking into account the impacts of climate change.  2. Development proposals, including the retrofit / refurbishment of existing buildings, should demonstrate that water reuse and recycling and rainwater-harvesting measures have been incorporated wherever possible in order to reduce demand on mains water supply as part of an integrated approach to water management.  3. All new residential development must be designed and built to achieve the Building Regulation mains water consumption standard of 110 litres per person per day or the highest water efficiency standard that applies at the time of the planning application.  4. All proposals for non-residential development should maximise water efficiencies under the mandatory water credits category in the BREEAM Water Consumption assessment methodology. |

**Policy case studies: Water Environment and Water quality**

**South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - Policy CC/7: Water Quality**

[South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk)](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/the-adopted-development-plan/south-cambridgeshire-local-plan-2018)

South Cambridgeshire policy CC/7 includes measures that all development proposals must demonstrate to protect and enhance water quality, including relevant infrastructure, protecting ground, surface and water bodies, renaturalisation of river morphology and ecology, and appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

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| **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018**  **Policy CC/7: Water Quality**  1. In order to protect and enhance water quality, all development proposals must demonstrate that:   * 1. There are adequate water supply, sewerage and land drainage systems (including water sources, water and waste water infrastructure) to serve the whole development, or an agreement with the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of the necessary infrastructure prior to the occupation of the development. Where development is being phased, each phase must demonstrate sufficient water supply and waste water conveyance, treatment and discharge capacity;   2. The quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed, and opportunities have been explored and taken for improvements to water quality, including renaturalisation of river morphology, and ecology;   3. Appropriate consideration is given to sources of pollution, and appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) measures incorporated to protect water quality from polluted surface water runoff.   2. Foul drainage to a public sewer should be provided wherever possible, but where it is demonstrated that it is not feasible, alternative facilities must not pose unacceptable risk to water quality or quantity. |

**Peterborough Local Plan 2019: Policy LP32: Flood and Water Management**

[Adopted Local Plan: development documents - Peterborough City Council](https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/planning-and-development/planning-policies/local-development-plan)

[Supplementary planning documents - Peterborough City Council](https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/planning-and-development/planning-policies/supplementary-planning-documents)

Peterborough policy LP32 and Flood and Water Management SPD not only sets out the council’s approach to flood risk management and water efficiency, but also protecting the water environment and water quality.

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| **Peterborough Local Plan 2019**  **Policy LP32: Flood and Water Management**  Development proposals should adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management, taking into account the requirements of the NPPF and the further guidance and advice set out in the council’s Flood and Water Management SPD.  Development located in areas known to be at risk from any form of flooding will only be permitted following:   * 1. the successful completion of a sequential test (if necessary) and an exception test if required;   2. the submission of a site-specific flood risk assessment, setting out appropriate flood risk management and demonstrating no increased risk of flooding to the development site or to existing properties, and where possible should seek to reduce flood risk;   3. the consideration of any necessary ongoing maintenance, management of mitigation measures and adoption and that any relevant agreements are in place; and   4. the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) into the proposals.   A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and risks involved, taking into account future climate change, will be required for development  proposals:   * in Flood Zones 2 and 3; and * in Flood Zone 1 where there are critical drainage problems; and * on sites of 1 hectare or greater in Flood Zone 1; and * sites where development or change of use to a more vulnerable use may be subject to * other sources of flooding; and * sites of less than 1 hectare in Flood Zone 1 where they could be affected by sources of * flooding other than from rivers and the sea.   Development proposals should also protect the water environment and must demonstrate:   * 1. that water is available to support the development proposed;   2. that development contributes positively to the water environment and its ecology where possible and does not adversely affect surface and ground water;   3. that adequate foul water treatment and disposal already exists or can be provided in time to serve the development;   4. in areas served by combined sewers, surface and foul flows should be separated and no new combined sewers created. Connections to the existing combined sewer should only be made in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that there are no feasible alternatives, such as (and in this priority order): into the ground (infiltration); to a surface water body; or to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system (this applies to new developments and redevelopments). Where and existing combined or surface water sewer is utilised, there must be no detriment to existing users of such a sewer;   5. that suitable access is safeguarded for the maintenance of water supply and drainage infrastructure.   **Water Efficiency**  To minimise impact on the water environment all new dwellings should achieve the Optional Technical Housing Standard of 110 litres per day for water efficiency as described by Building Regulation G2. |

**Milton Keynes Plan:MK 2016 – 2031 (2019)**

**Policy FR3: Protecting and Enhancing Watercourses**

[Plan:MK 2016-2031 (milton-keynes.gov.uk)](https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-05/PlanMK%20Adoption%20Version%20%28March%202019%29.pdf)

Milton Keynes shows a very high ambition due to multiple policies covering SuDS, integrated flood risk management, enhancement of biodiversity, a specific green infrastructure policy and especially Policy FR3: Protecting and Enhancing Watercourses. This policy seeks to ensure that development doesn’t impact watercourses and the water bodies. However, whilst the title of the policy refers to enhancing watercourses, this policy itself doesn’t include requirements or encouragement to enhance them only protect them.

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| **Milton Keynes Local Plan**  **Policy FR3: Protecting and Enhancing Watercourses**   1. All new development must be set back at a distance of at least 8 metres from any main rivers, at least 9 metres from all other ordinary watercourses, or at an appropriate width as agreed by the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority or Internal Drainage Board, in order to provide an adequate undeveloped buffer zone. Development that restricts future de-culverting of waterways should be avoided. 2. The Council will resist proposals that would adversely affect the natural functioning of main rivers, ordinary watercourses and wet or dry balancing lakes, this includes through the culverting of open channels, unless for access purposes. |

**Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan – Policy NE2: River and stream corridors**

[Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) (buckinghamshire-gov-uk.s3.amazonaws.com)](https://buckinghamshire-gov-uk.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Aylesbury_local_plan_L46JWaT.pdf)

Aylesbury Vale has considerable ecological and amenity value, and the Local Plan includes a policy to ensure the protection and enhancement of its watercourses.

A watercourse advice note for Aylesbury Vale has been produced by a partnership of organisations including, amongst others, Buckinghamshire Council and the Environment Agency. The advice note guides planning applications in line with the policy.

[Watercourse advice note (Aylesbury Vale area) | Buckinghamshire Council](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-development-plans-and-guidance/local-planning-guidance/watercourse-advice-note-aylesbury-vale-area/)

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| **Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan**  **Policy NE2: River and stream corridors**  Development proposals must not have an adverse impact on the functions and setting of any watercourse and its associated corridor. They should conserve and enhance the biodiversity, landscape and consider the recreational value of the watercourse and its corridor through good design. Opportunities for de-culverting of watercourses should be actively pursued. Planning permission will only be granted for proposals which do not involve the culverting of watercourses and which do not prejudice future opportunities for de-culverting. Development proposals adjacent to or containing a watercourse shall provide or retain a 10m ecological buffer (unless existing physical constraints prevent) from the top of the watercourse bank and the development, and include a long-term landscape and ecological management plan for this buffer. |

**Wealden District Council Draft Local Plan - Policy NE13: Water Environment and Water Instructure**

[Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan - Keyplan (wealden.gov.uk)](https://consult.wealden.gov.uk/kpse/event/2726CE98-03BA-4520-8558-361BAA45F784/section/s17090296420957)

Whilst Wealden Policy NE13 is still a draft policy, the Council states that they will support development proposals where the quantity and quality of surface and groundwater resources are protected from pollution and where possible enhanced. Developers will also be required to demonstrate that there is adequate on and off-site water infrastructure capacity, or that additional infrastructure can be provided in time, to serve the development, without leading to problems for existing users.

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| **Wealden District Council Draft Local Plan**  **Policy NE13: Water Environment and Water Instructure**  Water environment   1. Development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it would not result in an unacceptable risk to, or adversely affect, the quality, quantity, levels and ecology of surface water and groundwater resources within the district, including reservoirs. Applicants must have due regard to the Environment Agency’s Groundwater Protection guides in relation to potentially hazardous development proposed within Source Protection Zones (SPZs) or within 50m of a private water supply. 2. Development proposals must account for possible groundwater contamination in SPZs and where aquifers are present. Proposals will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that adequate safeguards against possible contamination of groundwater supplies or aquifers can be agreed, implemented and maintained. 3. New development adjacent to watercourses should seek to restore rivers to their natural state, including through de-culverting piped watercourses, where possible. 4. Any development adjacent to, over or in a watercourse needs to take into account the Water Framework Directive requirements and opportunities outlined in the South East River Basin Management Plan. 5. Potentially polluting development will not be permitted where there is a risk that it will cause harm to sensitive aquatic environments/areas within the district. 6. Work beneath the water table will not be permitted unless there is a comprehensive ground water management scheme agreed for the construction, operation, restoration, and ongoing management of the proposal.   Water Infrastructure   1. Development proposals must demonstrate that there is adequate existing water supply infrastructure (foul and surface drainage as well as drinking water provision) to serve the development over its lifetime. Where provision is inadequate / not available, proposals must set out how the appropriate infrastructure improvements will be completed prior to the development’s occupation. Any such proposals must be approved by the statutory undertaker. 2. Development should connect to a public sewage treatment works. If this is not feasible, proposals should be supported by sufficient information to understand the potential implications for the water environment. 3. In the interests of securing long-term water supply and wastewater management needed to serve existing or new development, proposals for new, or the expansion of existing, water supply or sewage treatment facilities and networks will be permitted provided that:   a) the need for such facilities outweighs any adverse land use or environmental impacts; and  b) that any such adverse impact is mitigated / minimised.   1. Necessary infrastructure provision will be secured through planning conditions and / or obligations. |

**Policy case studies: Wastewater**

**South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - Policy CC/7: Water Quality**

[South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 - South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk)](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/the-adopted-development-plan/south-cambridgeshire-local-plan-2018)

South Cambridgeshire policy CC/7 includes **consideration of wastewater** requiring all development proposals must demonstrate that adequate sewerage to serve the whole development, or an agreement with the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of the necessary infrastructure prior to the occupation of the development. Where development is being phased, each phase must demonstrate sufficient waste water conveyance, treatment and discharge capacity.

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| **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018**  **Policy CC/7: Water Quality**  1. In order to protect and enhance water quality, all development proposals must demonstrate that:   1. There are adequate water supply, sewerage and land drainage systems (including water sources, water and waste water infrastructure) to serve the whole development, or an agreement with the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of the necessary infrastructure prior to the occupation of the development. Where development is being phased, each phase must demonstrate sufficient water supply and waste water conveyance, treatment and discharge capacity; 2. The quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed, and opportunities have been explored and taken for improvements to water quality, including renaturalisation of river morphology, and ecology; 3. Appropriate consideration is given to sources of pollution, and appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) measures incorporated to protect water quality from polluted surface water runoff.   2. Foul drainage to a public sewer should be provided wherever possible, but where it is demonstrated that it is not feasible, alternative facilities must not pose unacceptable risk to water quality or quantity. |

**Cambridge City Local Plan - Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle**

[Local Plan 2018 - Cambridge City Council](https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/local-plan-2018)

Cambridge City Policy 31 requires that discharge and run-off from the developed site is not greater than from the undeveloped site.

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| **Cambridge Local Plan 2018**  **Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle**  Development will be permitted provided that:  a. surface water is managed close to its source and on the surface where reasonably practicable to do so;  b. priority is given to the use of nature services17;  c. water is seen as a resource and is re-used where practicable, offsetting potable water demand, and that a water sensitive approach is taken to the design of the development;  d. the features that manage surface water are commensurate with the design of the development in terms of size, form and materials and make an active contribution to making places for people;  e. surface water management features are multi-functional wherever possible in their land use;  f. any flat roof is a green or brown roof, providing that it is acceptable in terms of its context in the historic environment of Cambridge (see Policy 61: Conservation and Enhancement of Cambridge’s Historic Environment) and the structural capacity of the roof if it is a refurbishment. Green or brown roofs should be widely used in large-scale new communities;  g. there is no discharge from the developed site for rainfall depths up to 5 mm of any rainfall event;  h. the run-off from all hard surfaces shall receive an appropriate level of treatment in accordance with Sustainable Drainage Systems guidelines, SUDS Manual (CIRIA C753), to minimise the risk of pollution;  i. development adjacent to a water body actively seeks to enhance the water body in terms of its hydromorphology, biodiversity potential and setting;  j. watercourses are not culverted and any opportunity to remove culverts is taken; and  k. all hard surfaces are permeable surfaces where reasonably practicable, and having regard to groundwater protection  *17Nature services are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) as: ‘The benefits people obtain from ecosystems such as, food, water, flood and disease control and recreation’. These are also known as ecosystem services.* |

**Policy case studies: Green and Blue Infrastructure**

**A Sustainable Town. Watford Local Plan 2021-2038 (2022) - NE9.3 Blue Infrastructure Network**

[Watford Local Plan – www.watford.gov.uk](https://www.watford.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan/watford-local-plan)

Watford policy NE9.3 Blue Infrastructure Network considers is a clear policy dedicated to the water environment. It references the role of the Thames RBMP ‘good’ ecological status. It draws key links between the WFD and the planning system. It provides practical steps for the opening up and re-naturalising of watercourses.

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| **A Sustainable Town. Watford Local Plan 2021-2038 (2022)**  **NE9.3 Blue Infrastructure Network**  Development proposals in close proximity to watercourses must support the strategic importance of Watford’s blue infrastructure network and seek to maximise its multifunctional environmental, social and economic benefits. Where development is adjacent to a watercourse, proposals are expected to contribute to the Thames River Basin Management Plan (TRBMP) in achieving ‘good’ ecological status as defined by the Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives. Development proposals in close proximity to, or that include a watercourse must:  a) Maintain an undeveloped and unobstructed buffer strip of eight metres from the top of the bank of any Main River and any new development (including formal landscaping, sports fields, footpaths, lighting and fencing). Buffer zones should be natural in character, distinct from the built environment, with no light pollution greater than 2 lux, and with native species. Proposals should be accompanied by a management plan;  b) Conserve and enhance the biodiversity value of the watercourse and its corridor by including Water Framework Directive action measures within the proposal. Action measures could include but are not limited to, in-channel enhancements, the creation of priority wetland habitats, addressing misconnections and the eradication and management of Invasive Non-Native Species;  c) Enhance the role of watercourse corridors as an accessible active travel and leisure route for pedestrians, cyclists and boaters, and increase connectivity along the length of the watercourse. This includes connectivity and access, where appropriate, to the green infrastructure network;  d) Integrate the watercourse into the scheme as a vital part of the public realm; and  e) Open and re-naturalise modified watercourses, including culverted and piped waterways. New proposals for culverting will be refused and there is a presumption against the use of hard engineering, including gabions. A Water Framework Directive assessment should be submitted as part of proposals and should include an assessment of the works needed to prevent future flooding, in addition to how the proposal will impact Water Framework Directive status.  The provision of crossings and bridges will be supported where they improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, are in keeping with the setting of the area, and are designed to avoid obstructing flood flows and damage to a watercourse.  Flood Zones 2 and 3 are defined on the Policies Map |

**Peterborough Local Plan - Policy LP22 Green Infrastructure Network** **and** **Policy LP24: Nene Valley**

[Adopted Local Plan: development documents - Peterborough City Council](https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/planning-and-development/planning-policies/local-development-plan)

Peterborough policy LP22 sets out the council’s approach to green infrastructure. Whilst it focusses on green rather than green and blue infrastructure, it provides a useful example of a policy aiming to enhance, create and manage multi-functional green infrastructure. The council includes an additional policy focused on the Nene Valley which concentrates on safeguarding and enhancing recreation and/or bringing landscape, nature conservation, heritage, cultural or amenity benefits.

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| **Peterborough Local Plan**  **Policy LP22 Green Infrastructure Network**  The council, working in partnership with conservation and environmental organisations, local communities, developers and statutory agencies, will seek to maintain and improve the existing green infrastructure network in Peterborough. This will be achieved by enhancing, creating and managing multi-functional green infrastructure, within and around settlements, that are well connected to each other and the wider countryside, and which reflect the broad strategic framework set out in the Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity SPD.  The council will take into account the latest Open Space Strategy, Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity SPD and any other appropriate local evidence to guide applicants on what new green infrastructure will be required and how it should be delivered.  All development proposals should ensure that existing and new green infrastructure is considered and integrated into the scheme design from the outset. Where new green infrastructure is proposed, the design should maximise the delivery of ecosystem services and support healthy and active lifestyles.  Strategic and major development proposals should incorporate opportunities for green infrastructure provision, to reverse the decline in biodiversity and restore ecological networks at a landscape scale, reverse habitat fragmentation and increase connectivity of habitats, and to preserve, restore and create priority and other habitats within and adjacent to development schemes.  Proposals will be expected to provide clear arrangements for the long-term maintenance and management and/or enhancement of green infrastructure assets. Where appropriate, the council may utilise planning conditions, CIL or planning obligations to deliver green infrastructure projects. Development must protect the existing linear features of the green infrastructure network that provide connectivity between green infrastructure assets, including public rights of way, bridleways, cycleways and waterways, and take opportunities to improve such features.  Development proposals that cause loss or harm to the green infrastructure network will not be permitted, unless the need for and benefits of the development demonstrably outweigh any adverse impacts. Where adverse impacts on the green infrastructure network are unavoidable, development will only be permitted if suitable mitigation measures for the network are provided. Development proposals which are consistent with and support the delivery of the opportunities, priorities and initiatives identified in the Peterborough Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity SPD will be supported. |

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| **Peterborough Local Plan**  **Policy LP24: Nene Valley**  Within the area of the Nene Valley, as identified on the Policies Map, the council will support development that will safeguard and enhance recreation and/or bring landscape, nature conservation, heritage, cultural or amenity benefits. The proposal will need to be appropriate in terms of use, scale and character within its townscape or landscape setting. Development proposals will be particularly supported where they:  a. will enhance navigation along the River Nene for a wide range of recreational, cultural or transport purposes, without impacting negatively on wildlife or other land management activities. Development that creates new links with other waterways within and/or surrounding the local authority area will also be supported;  b. will protect and enhance biodiversity, and contribute to linking surrounding habitats through habitat creation and improved green infrastructure;  c. will enable greater public access to the water space and the achievement of continuous publicly accessible paths and cycle routes through the valley;  d. will enhance the provision of ecosystem services within the Nene Valley NIA;  e. will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Nene Washes International site or other designated sites in line with Policy LP28.  There will be a general emphasis on development involving low-impact, informal activities in the rural area of the valley, and development involving more formal activities in the urban area. In all cases, new development beside the river will be required to be designed with a frontage or open space to the river which creates a more natural water's edge and enhances its character.  Development which would increase flood risk, compromise the performance of flood defences or existing navigation facilities, or restrict access to such facilities will not be permitted. |

**Policy case studies: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)**

**Milton Keynes Plan:MK 2016 – 2031 (2019) - Policy FR2: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Integrated Flood Risk Management / Protecting and Enhancing Watercourses**

[Plan:MK 2016-2031 (milton-keynes.gov.uk)](https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-05/PlanMK%20Adoption%20Version%20%28March%202019%29.pdf)

Milton Keynes Policy FR2 states that as part of an Integrated Water Management (IWM) approach, SuDS will be designed strategically, with an allowance for the potential implications of climate change on extreme weather events, and the impact this may have over the lifetime of the proposed development.

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| **Milton Keynes Plan:MK 2016 – 2031 (2019)**  **Policy FR2**  ***Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and Integrated Flood Risk Management***  A. Plan:MK advocates the continuation of a strategic, integrated approach to managing flood risk which seeks the management of surface water to be planned at the largest appropriate scale for the new development and incorporated into the site at the earliest opportunity in the design process.  B. New development is required to incorporate SuDS; in line with national policy and guidance and, which meet the requirements set out in national standards and the Council’s relevant local guidance. It is expected that:  1. Flood risk management and SuDS will be provided at a strategic scale and in an integrated manner, wherever possible;  2. Space will be specifically set aside for SuDS and fluvial flood risk reduction features and used to inform the overall layout of development sites;  3. Above ground attenuation will be provided in preference to below ground attenuation;  4. SuDS will be designed as multi-purpose green infrastructure and open space, to maximise additional environmental, biodiversity, social and amenity value, wherever possible. The use of land to provide flood storage capacity should not conflict with required amenity and recreation provision - floodplains and floodplain habitats should be safeguarded;  5. SuDS will be designed with an allowance for climate change and the potential impact it may have over the lifetime of the proposed development;  6. Proposals for development within Critical Drainage Catchments, as identified in the Milton Keynes Surface Water Management Plan, should investigate the potential for the scheme to reduce or mitigate existing risk in the surrounding area;  7. All surface water drainage proposals for new development must include full details of the means of achieving future management, maintenance and adoption of the systems, prior to approval of any planning permission, to ensure that it will function effectively over the lifespan of the development. This will include details of funding and should be formulated through discussion with the relevant responsible bodies, including Milton Keynes Council, The Parks Trust, Anglian Water and the Internal Drainage Board;  8. Development will ensure no adverse impact on the functions and setting of a watercourse and its associated corridor;  9. Development should avoid building over or culverting watercourses, encourage the removal of existing culverts and seek opportunities to create wetlands and wet grasslands and woodlands and restore natural river flows and floodplains.  ***Protecting and Enhancing Watercourses***  A. All new development must be set back at a distance of at least 8 metres from any main rivers, at least 9 metres from all other ordinary watercourses, or at an appropriate width as agreed by the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority or Internal Drainage Board, in order to provide an adequate undeveloped buffer zone. Development that restricts future de-culverting of waterways should be avoided.  B. The Council will resist proposals that would adversely affect the natural functioning of main rivers, ordinary watercourses and wet or dry balancing lakes, this includes through the culverting of open channels, unless for access purposes. |